PEYOTISM AND MESCALISM [1]

by

Omer C. Stewart

ABSTRACT

The identity, origin, use and relationship of Peyote or Peyote buttons and mescal, mescal buttons, mescalbeans or mescaline continue to be confused. This paper examines the history of the confusion and uses ethnohistorical data to clarify the situation. Although Peyote, *Lophophora williamsii* and mescalbean, *Sophora secundiflora*, share the same general growth area, mostly in Mexico, the Spanish and Mexican reports on Peyote use are ancient and numerous, while nothing has been written about the use of mescalbeans south of the border. The use of the term mescalbean to refer to the red seed of *Sophora secundiflora* did not appear in print until 1914. A recent study shows that the greatest use of mescalbeans has been as beads. The paper concludes that theorists have inflated the importance of the relationship between mescalbeans and Peyote.

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Another example of confusion is the 419 articles listed under mescaline, but including Peyote in the *Cumulated Index Medicus* 1960-1978.

Furthermore, in 1976, Peter T. Furst wrote (p. 108):

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One can question whether it happened that way.

Probably the greatest international confusion between mescal and Peyote results from the great popularity of the allegory fabricated by Carlos Castaneda and published under the title *The Teachings of Don Juan* (1969). In chapters one and two (pp. 17-36) Castaneda combined mescal and Peyote and placed them under his own invented supernatural "Mescalito."

With four such examples of the continuing concern with Peyote and mescal it appears that another evaluation of that relationship is warranted. This study was also suggested by an article by Edward F. Anderson, "The biogeography, ecology, and taxonomy of *Lophophora* (*Cactaceae*)" (1969) and by a monograph by William L. Merrill, "An investigation of ethnographic and archaeolog-

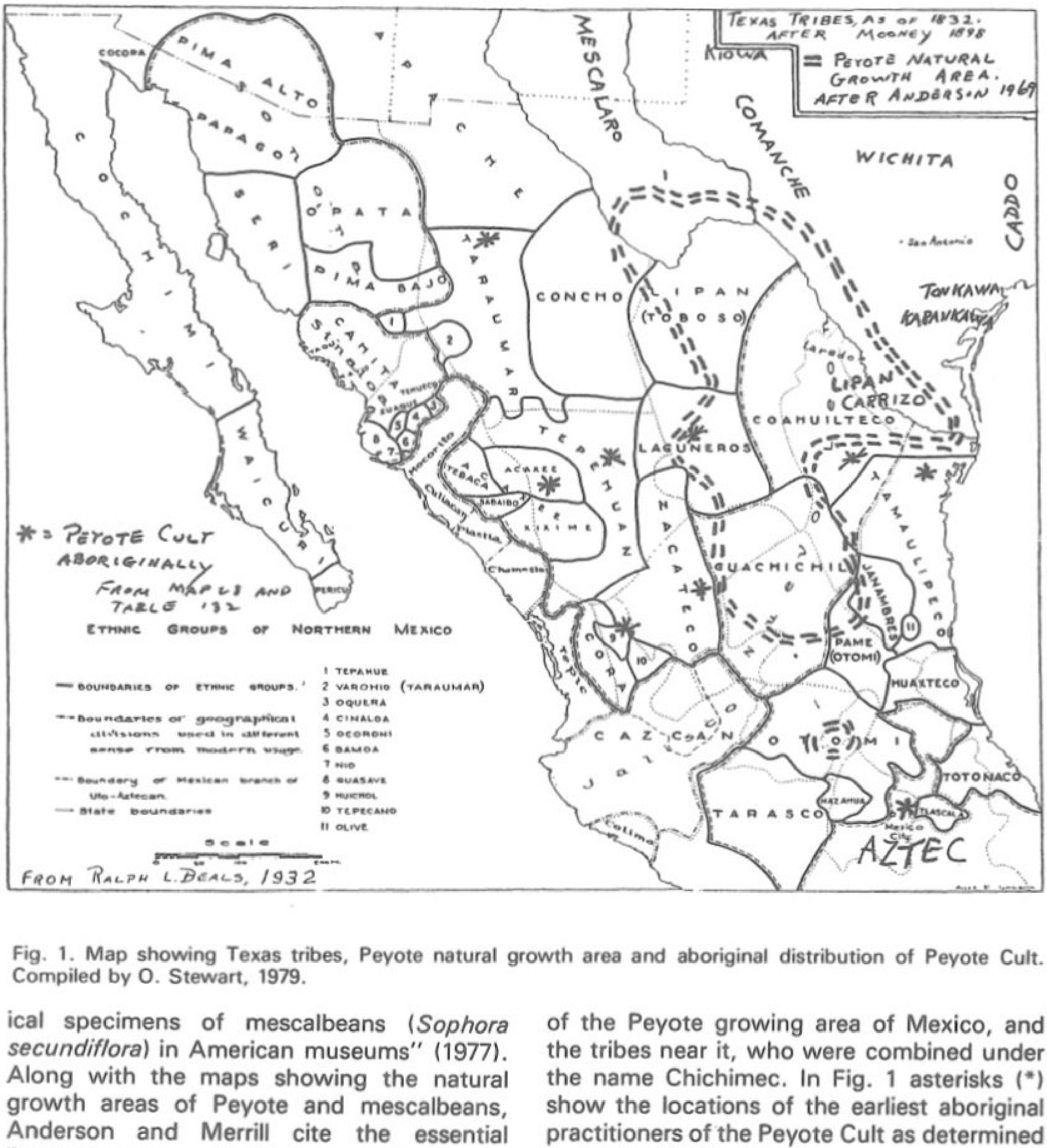

Fig. 1. Map showing Texas tribes, Peyote natural growth area and aboriginal distribution of Peyote Cult. Compiled by O. Stewart, 1979.

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B. Sahagun (ca. 1560), F. Hernandez (ca. 1576), Urbina (1900) and Safford (1915) identified Peyote and recognized the general limits of its range. Described as a small, spineless, grayish-green cactus which barely

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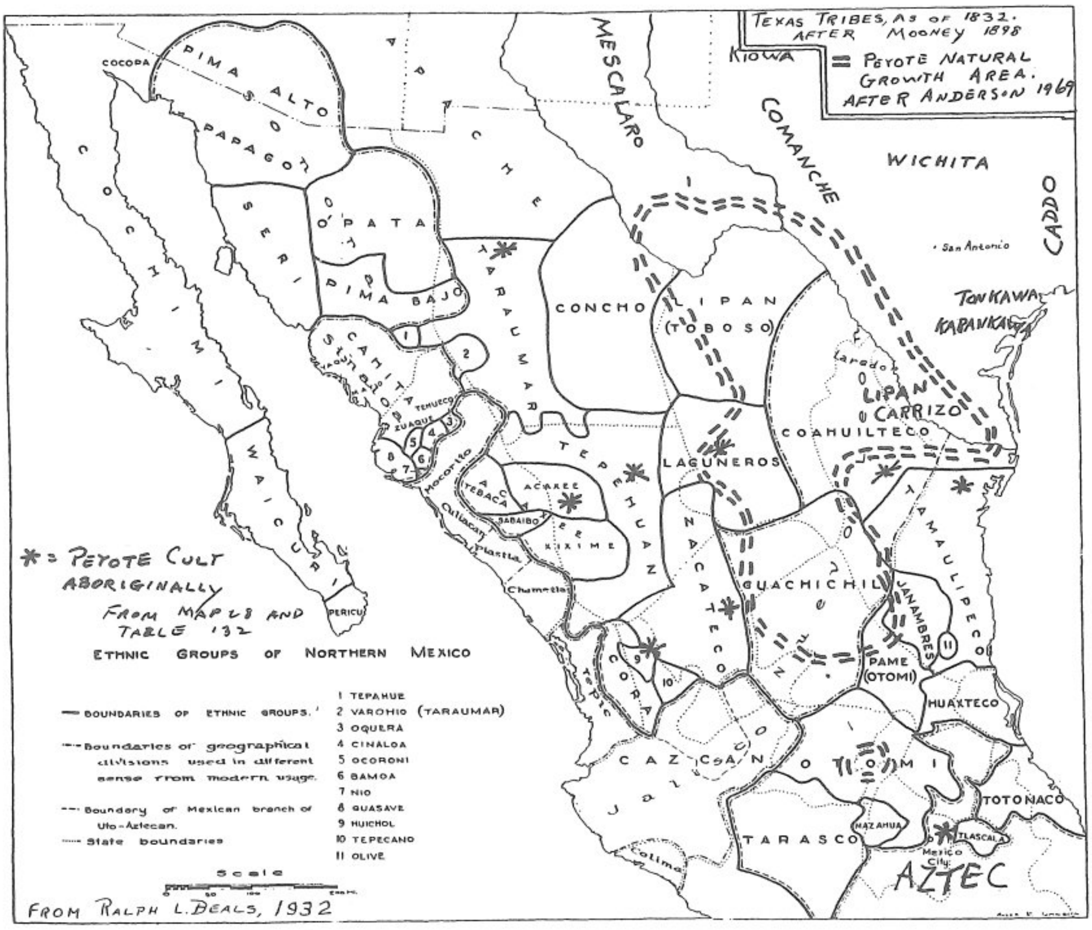

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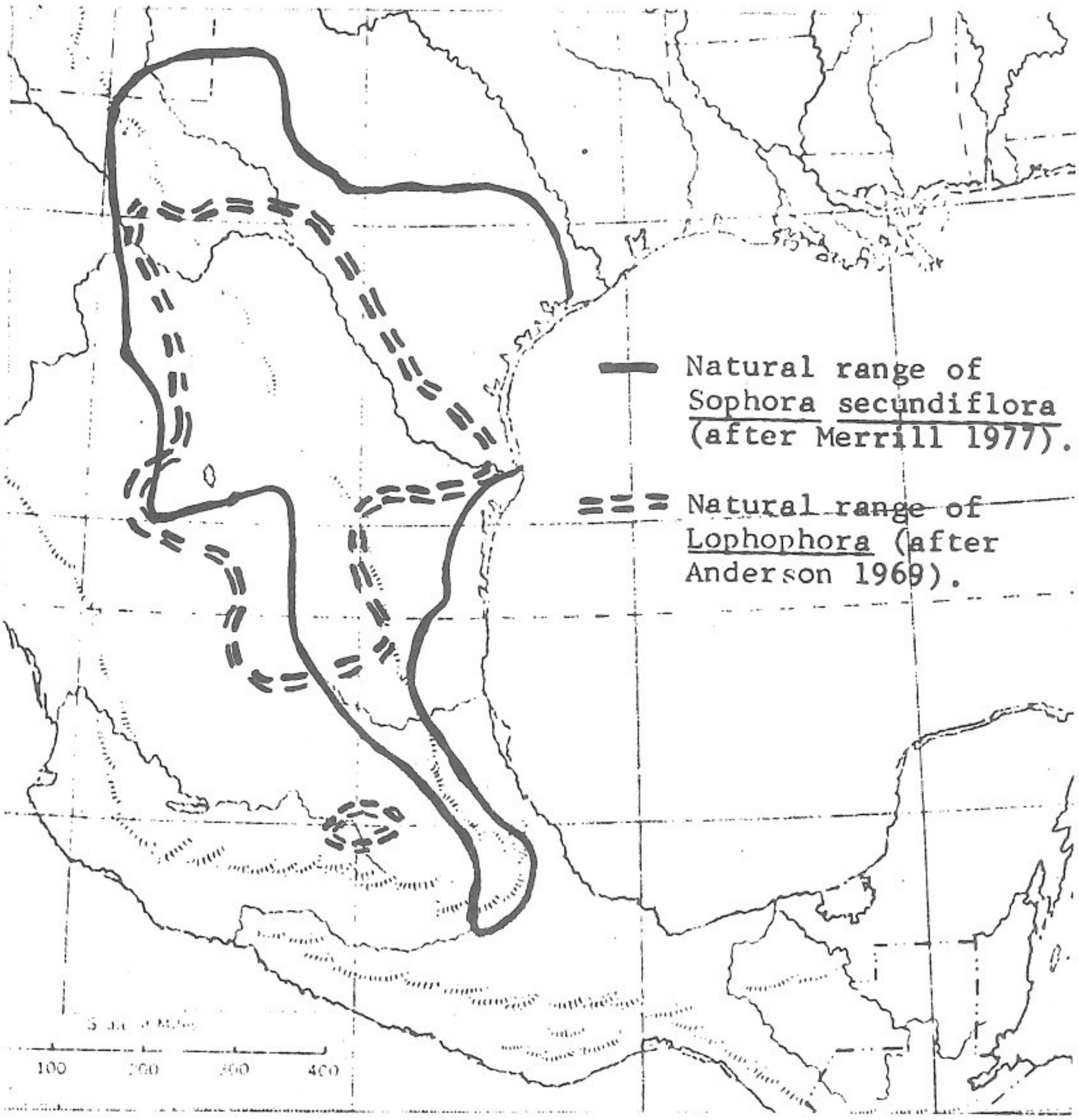
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Natural range of Lophophora (after Anderson 1969).
100
200
300
400

Fig. 2. Map showing range of *Sophora secundiflora* (after Merrill 1977) and natural range of *Lophophora* (after Anderson 1969).

projected above the ground, its use in ritual, to cure, to foretell the future and to find lost objects, and its ability to produce visions and a slight intoxication had caused it to be considered sacred by aborigines. Although recognized for what it was, *Peyotl*, as named by the Aztec, was confused, most spectacularly by Safford (1915), with other psychedelic plants used by the aborigines in Mexico, such as *Teonanacatl*, the sacred mushroom, and *Ololiuqui*, the morning glory. The mistakes of Safford (1915), many times quoted by others, were finally corrected by Schultes (1937a).

In view of the fact that nearly all of the growth area of Peyote in Mexico was within the natural area of the mescalbean (*Sophora secundiflora*) as shown in Fig. 2 it is surprising that early Spanish reports of use of Peyote in Mexico carry no word of the use of mescalbeans for purposes similar to Peyote. For example, Slotkin (1955) listed over 30 Spanish publications relating to Peyote from 1577 to 1800. Aguirre Beltran (1963) enumerated 74 Inquisition court cases dealing with

Peyote 1614 to 1779. Although the growth area of *Sophora* in Mexico exceeds the area of *Lophophora* growth no reference was made to the mystical use of the red bean of *Sophora* during the time that over a hundred references were made to the use of Peyote for mystical purposes.

According to Safford (1916:397), Ortega "described and figured" in 1798 a *Sophora secundiflora* "growing in the Royal Garden at Madrid." In 1963 Schultes reported that references to the mescalbeans "go back to 1539, when Cabeza de Vaca spoke of them as objects of trade amongst the Texas indians." Two other Spanish references to *Sophora* in Texas cited by Troike (1962) suggest that Texas Indians used *Sophora* seed in ritual. He wrote (p. 949): "According to the missionary Francisco Hidalgo, the Caddo of East Texas used the mescal beans (called *frixolillo* or *frijolillo* in Spanish) as early as 1716: . . . 'in the dances which they have, the Indian man or woman who is intoxicated with the peyote or *frixolillo*, . . . tells what he [or she] has seen . . .' " The second citation is from Father Bartholome Garcia (1760) of the San Antonio mission and was part of a confessional in the Coahuiltecan language, rendered in English as follows (Troike 1962:954): "Have you eaten Peyote? Did it intoxicate you? Have you eaten *frixolillo*? Did it intoxicate you?" Taylor (1966:129-130) comments on Garcia's catechism and compares it to an earlier form prepared in Mexico by Father B. Alva in 1635. The Mexico City confessional and that of San Antonio asked if the confessor had eaten human flesh or Peyote, but the question regarding the coral bean or *frixolillo*, was absent from the Mexican edition. Thus notwithstanding early Spanish knowledge of the shrub *Sophora secundiflora* the use of its bright red bean in magic or religion escaped the early Catholics in Mexico.

Having sketched the early history of Peyote and found it associated with the mescalbean only in Texas, a few more words of definition of mescal is called for. There are few words which have taken on so many diverse meanings. It seems appropriate to start with the entry in the Handbook of American Indians.

> MESCAL (Aztec: *mexcalli, 'metl* [maguey) liquor'). The fleshy leaf bases and trunk of various species of agave. It was roasted in pit ovens and became a sweet and nutritious food among the Indians of the states on both sides of the Mexican Boundry. . . .
>
> The product must not be confounded with the distilled spirit known in Mexico under the same name, nor with *peyote* (Hodge, ed. 1907,I:845).

To the above LaBarre (1938:15) added. "By extension the term is applied to the intoxicant distilled from the native beer, pulque, also made from *Agave* spp. A more precise designation of this native brandy (as opposed to the native beer) is tesvino and its variants, from the Nahuatl tehuinti or teyuinti, 'intoxicating.' " In Mexico neither Indians nor other citizens have applied the word mescal to Peyote or to the red beans of the *Sophora*. Unfortunately, in the United States mescal came to designate three different plants, *Agave*, spp, *Lophophora williamsii*, and *Sophora secundiflora*. The earliest American reference to Peyote is in Havard (1885:470), in which he identified it as *Anhelonia fissurata*, and *A. williamsii* with the Spanish name *Pallote* and English Peyote. In the same study he described

> *Sophora secundiflora* (Frijolilo; Coral Bean) Stout ornamental shrub. . . . The pod holds 3 or 4 round, red beans, the size of small marbles, and very poisonous. . . . According to Dr. Rothrock (who quotes Mr. Bellanger, of Texas, as his informant) The Indians near San Antonio used this bean as an intoxicant, half a bean producing delirious exhilaration followed by a sleep which lasts 2 or 3 days, and it is asserted that a whole bean would kill a man (Havard 1885:500).

In 1888 the annual report of Indian Agent E. E. White wrote of *Woqui* of the Comanche and added: "Its common name here among the whites is mescal bean." At about the same time J.R. Briggs, M.D., of Dallas ate some Peyote, and reported his experience to the *Medical Register* which published it April 7, 1887, and it was soon reprinted in the *Druggists' Bulletin* (1887:87), under the title "Muscale Buttons — Physiological Action — a Mexican Fruit with Possible Medicinal Virtues." In 1887 Briggs sent five bushels of Muscale buttons to Parke-Davis in Detroit. In 1888, Park-Davis sent buttons to Louis Lewin in Germany who shared them with D. Henning. According to Bender (1968:163): "Muscale buttons entered into the literature of medicine as *Anhalonium Lewinii', Henning*" by means of an article in the *Therapeutic Gazette* (Lewis 1888:231-37).

The misnomer continued and enlarged in

reports of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs until the error was identified in an Oklahoma court in 1907. It expanded to the scholarly and popular literature through the mistakes of Smithsonian Ethnologist James Mooney who was a participant observer in a Kiowa Peyote meeting in early 1891. When writing of it in a letter in April 1891, he called it the "mescal ceremony." In a speech before the Anthropological Society of Washington, as reported November 4, 1891, in the Washington D.C. *Evening Star*, Mooney talked on "The Kiowa Mescal Rite." A copyrighted story by Mooney in the January 24, 1892 issue of *The Augusta Chronicle* had the headline EATING THE MESCAL. *The American Anthropologist* (1892:64-65) published a short article and a photograph of a Peyote rattle with the title "A Kiowa Mescal Rattle." Under the title "The Mescal Plant and Ceremony," Mooney published a paper in *The Therapeutic Gazette* in which the names for *Anhalonium williamsii* were explained as follows:

> Among the Kiowa it was *seni*; among the Comanche *wokowi*; with the Mescaleros, *ho*; and with the Tarahumaris, *hikori*. The traders of the Indian Territory commonly call it mescal, although it must not be confounded with another mescal in Arizona, the *Agave* . . . The local Mexican name upon the Rio Grande is *peyote* or *pellote*, from the old Aztec name *peyotl*. . . . The Mescalero Apache take their name from it. (Mooney 1896:7-11)

In a footnote Mooney reports "Mr. Colville, botanist of the Agricultural Department, has made a distinct genus of the mescal plant, calling it *Lophophora williamsii* Lewinii." In 1897, Mooney wrote of "The Kiowa Peyote Rite," in *Der Urquell*.

The drug company of Parke-Davis supplied some European scholars with large samples of Peyote, which soon became known and shared. A few years later James Mooney of Smithsonian Institution furnished Peyote in sufficient quantity to several American doctors for objective tests of the properties and effects of the cactus. Havelock Ellis, an early English psychologist, in June 1897 published one of the first such studies in a medical journal entitled "A Note on the Phenomena of Mescal Intoxication." Slightly enlarged and rewritten it reappeared in a literary journal, *The Contemporary Review', as "Mescal: A* New Artificial Paradise" in January 1898. Within months it was reprinted without change in the Annual Report of Smithsonian Insitution for 1897, pp. 537-548 (published April 1898). It entered public knowledge by being reprinted in *Popular Science Monthly* in 1902. It may have been reprinted many times, but I have in hand one by Ebin (1961). In 1898 Ellis gave the background for his experiment as follows:

> In 1891 Mr. James Mooney, of the United States Bureau of Ethnology, having frequently observed the mescal rites of the Kiowa Indians and assisted at them called the attention of the Anthropological Society at Washington to the subject, and three years later he brought to Washington a supply of mescal, which was handed over for examination to Drs. Prentiss and Morgan. These investigators experimented on several young men, and demonstrated, for the first time, the precise character of mescal intoxication and the remarkable visions to which it gives rise. A little later Dr. Weir Mitchell, who in addition to his eminence as a physician, is a man of marked aesthetic temperament, experimented on himself, and published a very interesting record of the brilliant visions by which he was visited under the influence of the plant. In the spring of the past year I was able to obtain a small sample of mescal in London, and as my first experiment with mescal was also, apparently, the first attempt to investigate its vision-producing properties outside America, I will describe it in some detail, in preference to drawing on the previously published descriptions of American observers. (Ellis 1898:)

At this point in his article he drew attention to this footnote: "Lewin, of Berlin, indeed experimented with *Anhalonium Lewinii*, to which he gave its name, as early as 1888, and as he found that even a small portion produced dangerous symptoms, he classed it amongst the extremely poisonous drugs, like strychnia." The importance of the early experiments is evidenced from their being cited by ethnologist Edward H. Spicer (1969:320-322) in his review of the first volume by Carlos Castaneda.

The experimenting has continued, and in recent years, almost entirely with the synthetic alkaloid Mescaline, rather than by eating an unmodified part of the cactus. Reports of such experiments form the massive medical literature, 419 articles in 20 years, easily found from titles listed in the *Cumulated Index Medicus*. No more than a dozen of the titles suggested articles of ethnohistorical content. Being based on the synthetic aklaloid the medical experimenters seem unconcerned and untroubled with the fact that the alkaloid's name suggests a relationship to a liquor made from *Agave* rather than being the most active of several alkaloids in *Lophora williamsii* or Peyote.

The error of using mescal, mescal button and mescalbean to designate Peyote has had most troublesome consequences in legal matters. The first law to prohibit Peyote in the United States was enacted by the Oklahoma Territorial legislature in 1899 upon the recommendation of U.S. Indian Agents (Woodson, 1899), but the law was ineffectual when tested in court in 1907, because the law declared the use of "mescal beans" was unlawful. The 1907 cases were dismissed because the Indians convinced the judge they used Peyote in their rituals and not mescalbeans. Further clarification came in January 1908 when Indian Agents attempted to amend the anti-mescalbean law by adding "Peyote." The Peyotists blocked the attempt to outlaw Peyote by having a large delegation of Peyotist Indian Chiefs including Quanah Parker (Comanche), Joe Springer (Iowa), Black Dog (Osage) and others testify that red beans were not eaten in Peyote meetings and that only Peyote was consumed in such rituals. The newly-created Oklahoma State legislature then repealed the anti-mescalbean law and refused to pass the anti-Peyote law (Documents in Oklahoma Historical Society).

Since the U.S. Government officials from 1888 until 1908 used the name "mescal button" or "mescalbean" to designate Peyote in hundreds of letters, reports, publications, etc. it was difficult to change. Following the court rulings in Oklahoma and the action of the Oklahoma legislature specifying that mescalbean did not signify Peyote for legal purposes the Bureau of Indian Affairs nearly always wrote "peyote or mescal," and tried to popularize Peyote as the name for the cactus *Lophophora williamsii*. Until 1907 mescalbean was used *only* to mean the dried product of the *Lophophora williamsii*, since then called the Peyote button.

By some mysterious process when the misnomer for Peyote, mescalbean, was forcibly stopped from signifying Peyote it reappeared as the misnomer for the coral bean or *frixolillo*, that is, for the red seed of *Sophora secundiflora*. The shift appears to have started in February 1907 when a large delegation of Peyotists met with the Medical Committee of the Oklahoma Consitutional Convention. On the catalog card for a group photograph of the committee and delegation appears the following: "At this meeting, Chief Quannah explained that mescalbeans were poison and peyote is herb learned from the Mexican Indians to the Lipan Apache, then Comanche, Kiowa, etc." Kiowa-Apache Tennyson Berry, identified himself and others on the photograph when he presented it to the Fort Still Museum and told what took place.

Also in February 1907 was the trial of Peyotists in Kingfisher, Oklahoma, three were convicted, but later freed on appeal. After the legal difficulties officials of the BIA exchanged dozens of letters seeking to firmly identify mescalbeans. On August 21, 1907, Special Indian Agent R. S. Connell wrote to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in Washington D.C. as follows: "The bean which he expects the Mexican Indians to swear to as a mescalbean . . . is called Frijolillo or Coral bean. . . . Mescal is a term used for poison." Connell cited a U.S. National Herbarium publication giving "an accurate description" of Frijolillo or Coral bean, but the reference to *Sophora secundiflora* does *not* apply the name mescalbeans to the red seeds.

In 1908, at the hearings before the Oklahoma legislature, Quannah said: "The mescalbean cannot be eaten . . . it is peyote that is used as medicine." He also said he had seen in Mexico three plants used by Indians: "One is a bean, like a peanut; mescal grows that high (indicating top of desk) and the whiskey is made of that; and there is the Peyote we use." An Iowa chief, Joe Springer, testified: "I told my agent that there is no such thing as mescalbean in American . . . . they make mescal whiskey in Old Mexico . . . the little red bean—we call it red medicine." Attorney for the Indians, D. K. Cunningham, also made remarks before the legislators, as follows: "As a matter of fact, there is no such thing as the mescalbean, but because these words were in quotation marks [as the law was printed] it was said that they were intended to mean Peyote . . . . Indians do not want to use mescal. They do not want to use that bean. That bean is poisonous and dangerous . . . you cannot take more than two or three without it being likely to kill you."

From my search of botanical and ethnographic literature the earliest published example of use of mescalbean in ritual is in the monograph by Murie, "Pawnee Indian Societies" (1914:605) as follows: "The *raris ta*, or deer society, is found among all divisions, but its ritual seems to be in keeping of the Skidi organization. The fundamental elements of the ritual seem to be based upon the mescal bean, for this society teaches that all animal powers were learned through the power of the mescal bean." Mescalbeans were used during initiation and the candidate was made unconscious. Murie and his editors at the American Museum of Natural History, did not otherwise identify mescalbean, except to *not* connect it with Peyote, which was also discussed in the monograph.

In 1915, the American Museum of Natural History also published a monograph, "Iowa Societies," by Alanson Skinner, which may have been the most important of all papers to establish mescalbean as the proper name to designate the red seed of *Sophora secundiflora*. It is ironic that Iowa Chief Joe Springer, who testified in Oklahoma in 1908 that "there is no such thing as mescal bean," was quoted by Skinner (1915:724) as saying: "The name peyote is Mexican and it is not to be confounded with 'mescal' which is a different plant, bearing red beans which come two or three in a pod." Skinner (1915:718-719) did not quote an informant for his account of the Red Bean Dance but wrote as follows: "This is an ancient rite (*mankacutzi waci*) far antedating the modern peyote eating practice but on the same principle. The society was founded by a faster who dreamed that he received it from the deer, for red beans (mescal) are sometimes found in a deers stomach." Elsewhere in the report on the Red Bean Dance, mescal is not repeated but red bean is used several times. The importance of Skinner's monograh is manifest in its being quoted by Safford (1916:397-398) to support his own view that mescalbean is a proper name for the seeds of *Sophora secundiflora*. After reporting that the shrub had been early planted in the Royal Garden in Madrid, Safford wrote:

> From Texas, reports have been received that the seeds have poisoned children. The plant, though usually avoided by animals, is eaten by deer and goats, and the herd, glossy beans when swallowed whole are apparently harmless. In early days they were much used by certain tribes of Indians for making a narcotic decoction, and when ground to a powder were put in mescal, or Agave brandy, to make it more intoxicating; hence the name 'mescal bean,' which was formerly applied to them. (Safford 1916:397-398)

After quoting Havard (1885:500) regarding *Sophora secundiflora*, as I have above, which does not use mescal bean, Safford quotes from Skinner the phrase "red bean (mescal)." In another monograph on the Iowa, Skinner (1926:245-247) quotes ethnographic notes recorded by M. R. Harrington from conversations with Iowa Chief David Tohee as follows: "Now, the 'Red Medicine' which forms the basis of the bundle, is the sacred red Mescal bean (*erythrina flabelliformis*) which seems to have narcotic or perhaps intoxicating properties." *Erythrina* and *Sophora* both have bright red seeds which may be mistakenly interchanged. Finally, Boughton and Hardy (1935) made it explicit with a pamphlet "Mescalbean (*Sophora secundiflora*) poisonous for cattle."

In 1936 Weston LaBarre and Richard Schultes were together in Oklahoma studying the Peyote religion. Based in part on that fieldwork, especially among the Kiowa, in 1937 Schultes published two numbers of the Botanical Museum Leaflets, Harvard University, on Peyote and plants confused with it and plants used in its ceremony. At the same time LaBarre at Yale was writing his Ph.D. dissertation which was published in 1938 as The Peyote Cult. With both Schultes and LaBarre accepting mescalbean as equivalent to the *Sophora secundiflora* (Frijolillo; Coral bean) of Havard (1885:500) a pattern was firmly set to be used thereafter for considerable theorizing.

It seems appropriate to start with a quotation from LaBarre (1938:15):

> 'Mescal bean' as used to designate *Lophophora williamsii* is quite indefensible, being wrong on two accounts: the 'mescal' bean proper is *Sophora secundiflora* (= *Broussonetia secundiflora*) or incorrectly, *Erythrina flabelliformis*. The former is a red bean which was used in a pre-peyote narcotic cult of the southern Plains. . . . The adjectival use 'mescal' in the designation 'mescal beans' or 'mescal buttons' no doubt comes from the known intoxicating properties of the distilled liquor mescal, as extended in meaning to other unfamiliar new intoxicants. *Sophora secundiflora* (bean) and *Lophophora williamsii* (cactus); . . . Further confusion of peyote with mescal has arisen from the north Mexican habit of mixing the two in a drink.

If the red seed of the *Sophora secundiflora*, named *frijolillo* and/or coral bean for a couple of centuries, should be properly designated "mescal" bean, LaBarre might well have explained why such a designation was not made in print until it was put down by Murie (1914:605) and Skinner (1915:718), for the Iowa and Pawnee, both tribes being relatively recent migrants into Oklahoma from the north.

It is interesting that LaBarre should report that Peyote was called mescalbean or button because Peyote was at times added to mescal brandy, to increase its ability to intoxicate. Safford (1916:397) said the red seeds of *Sophora* acquired the name mescalbeans because they were added to mescal or Agave brandy. The surprising fact is that neither Peyote nor *frijolillo* were designated mescalbeans in Mexico.

When it is known that the natural growth area of mescalbean (*Sophora secundiflora*) extends beyond that of Peyote in east Texas (see Fig. 2), one would be warranted in assuming that the ritual use of mescalbeans in that area was older than Peyotism. In the region where Peyote and mescalbean both grow, which is nearly all of the Peyote natural area, there appears to be no reason to assume the use of one began before the use of the other. It is my opinion that hunting and gathering peoples learned the properties of all plants, animals, and insects which occurred in their home territory shortly after arriving in the area. Indians would have discovered and eaten both Peyote and mescalbeans in south Texas and northern Mexico as soon as they arrived and would have declared both possessed of supernatural powers because both produced very marked physical and psychic reactions. In the area where both grow, as in Mexico one might expect that the milder, safer plant would have greater use and develop into a cult. The poisonous red bean of *Sophora* might be expected to be treated like another poisonous narcotic of the area, *Datura*.

It is not surprising that the tough red bean was traded more widely, earlier then Peyote simply because of its attractive appearance, and its greater durability, which might also explain the red bean in possession of an Arapaho on the western plains as reported by the Stephen Long Expedition in 1820 (James 1905:217). Also the toughness of the mescalbean could account for its being found in great quantities and at deeper levels in archaeological sites in the Peyote-mescalbean growth area.

Howard (1957) proposed that the mescalbean cult preceded and probably provided the basic cultural elements to the milder Peyote cult in their place of origin. Although LaBarre (1957) was quick to find fault with much of Howard's article he did say (p. 710): "Howard's basic thesis that the ritual form of peyotism is derived from an earlier mescal bean ceremony is a good one." He reported some archaeological evidence for the antiquity of mescalbeans in south Texas and modern Mexico. Campbell (1958) reported many archaeological finds of mescalbeans and two finds of Peyote in Texas caves, but it remained for Adovasio and Fry (1976) to report that hundreds of mescalbeans had been found in many deposits dated back to 7500 B.C. while Peyote had been in only a few sites in levels 810 to 1070 A.D.

In 1962, Troike reviewed the evidence for the relationship between mescalism and Peyotism and expressed doubt that mescalism preceded Peyotism. Troike wrote (p. 961): "Thus the mescal bean, along with peyote and datura, seems to have been part of a widespread and very ancient narcotic complex in northern Mexico."

The opinion that the potentially lethal red bean cult preceded the Peyote religion continues to be expressed (Schultes 1972, 1973; LaBarre 1972, 1975; Furst 1972, 1976). LaBarre, according to Furst (1972:VIII) attributes use of psychotropogens "to a kind of cultural programming for personal ecstatic experience reaching back to the American Indians' ideological roots in the shamanistic religion of the Upper Paleolithic and Mesolithic hunting and gathering cultures of northeastern Asia." In 1976, Furst was able to cite *The Natural Mind* of Dr. Andrew T. Weil (1972:17) as follows: "The desire to alter consciousness periodically is an innate, normal drive analogous to hunger or the sexual drive." Furst continues with an unqualified assertion that evidence for a red bean (*Sophora*) cult goes back to 7265 B.C. and that use of *Sophora* was replaced by the "benign peyote cactus."

Most scholars recognize that assertions that a red bean cult was present about 7000 B.C. are not warranted. No undisputed evidence from archaeology justifies more than a cautious opinion that the finds of *Sophora* beans suggest the possibility of a cult. No

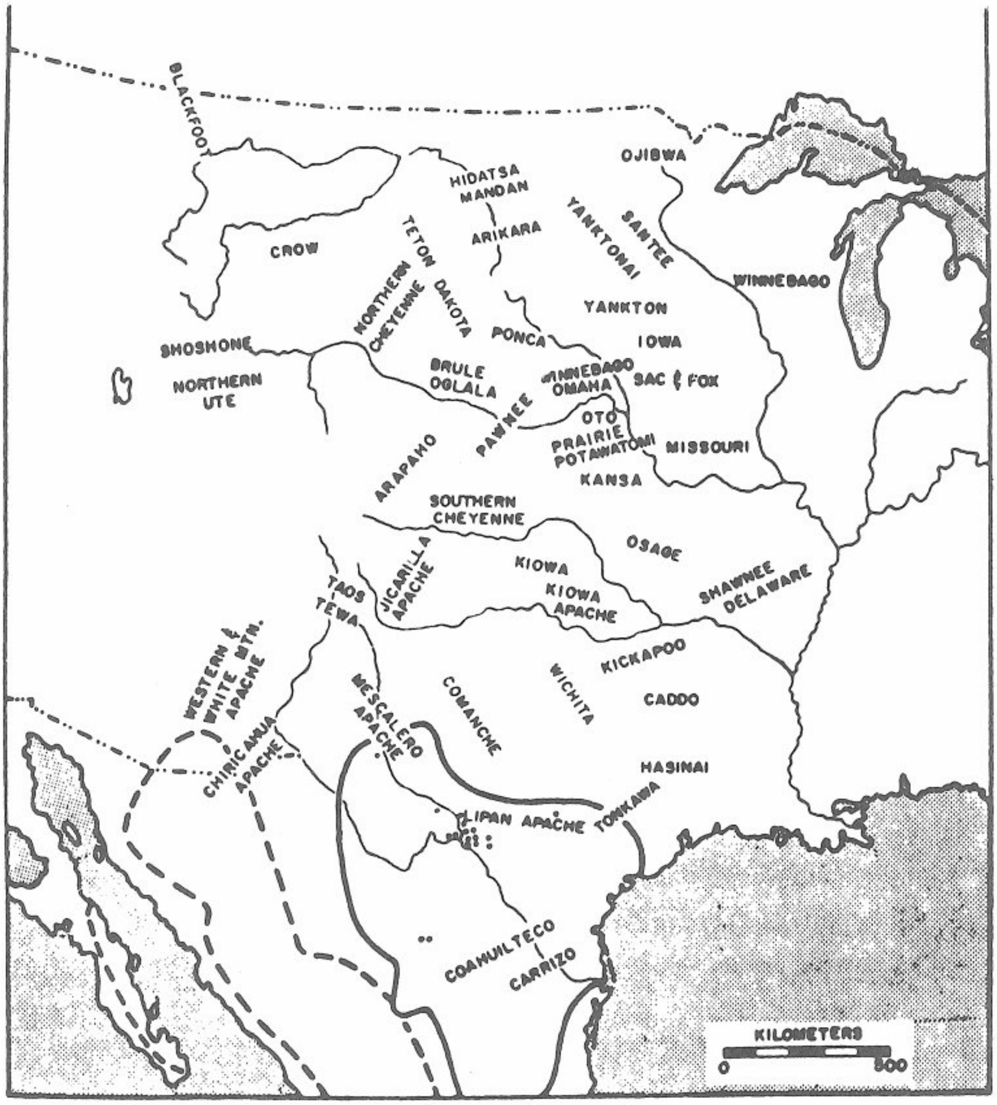

Fig. 3. Approximate locations of Indian groups discussed in text. The solid heavy line indicates the limits of the distribution of *Sophora secundiflora*, the broken heavy line, that of *Erythrina flabelliformis*. The dots that appear within the solid heavy line mark the location of archaeological sites from which mescalbeans have been recovered. From: *An Investigation of Ethnographic and Archaeological Specimens of Mescalbeans |Sophora Secundiflora| in American Museums*. (Merrill 1977:6).

Spanish historic reports I could find state that *Sophora secundiflora* beans were used in rituals in Mexico.

A new study of mescalism has recently appeared, from which Fig. 3 I was taken, showing the *Sophora secundiflora* growth area and giving locations of the tribes discussed. In 1977, William L. Merrill of the University of Michigan Museum published an exhaustive review of published references to mescalbeans (*Sophora secundiflora*) and examined museum collections of mescalbeans and items decorated with them from the seven largest ethnographic museums in eastern United States and received photographs and descriptions of such items from eight other museums coast to coast. Merrill (1977:1x) wrote:

> The exploitation of the psychotropic properties of mescalbeans was the most dramatic use of mescalbeans by North American Indian groups, and the most elaborate symbolism and ceremonialism associated with the use of mescalbeans was developed by those American Indian groups who employed them in this fashion. Yet, of the more than thirty North American Indian groups who were familiar with mescalbeans, less than half are known ever to have consumed them. Without question, the most widespread and continuous purpose for which North American Indian groups have employed mescalbeans is as seed beads attached to a wide variety of articles. . .

An archaeological specimen from Val Verde County, Texas, a buckskin loin cloth decorated with *Sophora secundiflora* seeds, illustrates the ancient use of the beans as decoration (Merrill 1977:7).

Merrill identifies forty-four tribal groups which, use mescalbeans as material culture. Five of these lived or traveled in the natural growth areas of *Sophora secundiflora* and *Lophophora williamsii* in pre-Spanish times. These were Coahuilteco, Tonkawa, Caddo, Wichita, and Mescalero Apache. The tribes which moved into the natural range of *Sophora* followed Spanish occupation of the American Southwest and Texas, but before 1850 were the Kiowa, Kiowa-Apache, Comanche and Lipan Apache. Of the eighteen tribes Merrill names as consuming mescalbeans individually or ceremonially, eight are named above; i.e., all except the Kiowa-Apache. The other ten red-bean-eaters never occupied the natural range of *Sophora*. Four of the groups who lived for long periods during the last two centuries in the natural range of *Sophora* left no record of ceremonial use of the mescalbean. These are Lipan Apache, Mescalero Apache, Kiowa-Apache and Kiowa, and there is some question about Comanche. Nine prairie tribes with mescalbean ceremonial use never occupied the *Sophora* natural area, although seven of the nine moved into Oklahoma from farther north during the last third of the nineteenth century. These seven were Pawnee, Iowa, Oto, Missouri, Kansas, Osage and Ponca. Only the Prairie Potawatomi and Omaha developed mescalbean rites without staying in Oklahoma or living for long periods in the *Sophora* natural growth area.

Twenty-five other tribal groups have used mescalbeans as seed bead decoration, but have no record of using them in special red bean ceremonies. These include Blackfoot, Crow and Cheyenne of Montana; Arikara, Mandan, Hidatsa and Sioux of North Dakota; Ojibwa of Minnesota; Omaha and Winnebago of Nebraska; Sioux of South Dakota; Sac and Fox, Shawnee, Delaware, Kickapoo, Arapaho and Cheyenne of Oklahoma; Taos, Santa Clara and Apache of Arizona, and Shoshone and Arapaho of Wyoming.

When considering presence or absence of Peyotism among the forty-four groups who used mescalbeans to decorate materials, it is obvious there is a high correlation between the two. That eight groups of mescalbean users should not also have Peyote might come as a surprise, especially when it is learned the eight are made up of three groups of Sioux in South Dakota; three groups of Apache in southern Arizona; the Blackfoot of Montana and the Santa Clara Pueblo of New Mexico. Of more interest may be the reports of Peyotism among the eighteen Indian groups where mescal was ingested in a ritual or as a medicine.

Except for one, the nine groups occupying the area of natural growth consumed *Sophora secundiflora* and *Lophophora williamsii*. Only Kiowa-Apache among the early Peyotists are not known to ingest mescalbeans. The groups longest in the Peyote and mescalbean area, the Coahuilteco, Tonkawa, Caddo, and Lipan Apache would seem to be the organizers of the Peyote religion which was taught directly to the other five groups which had traveled most in the *Sophora* and *Lophophora* areas—the Wichita, Comanche, Kiowa, Kiowa-Apache and the Mescalero Apache.

I have now well documented and named the four Lipan Apache Indians who were born near Laredo, Texas, and who settled with the Kiowa, Kiowa-Apache and Comanche and who were named as teachers of the Peyote ritual around Fort Sill in Indian Territory, now western Oklahoma. The best known is Chivato, who was photographed in a Peyote meeting wearing a mescalbean bandoleer.

In 1859, the only U.S. Indian reservation in Texas was raided and the Indians were forced to flee to Indian Territory. The role of the Caddo, Tonkawa and Wichita, removed from the growth area of *Sophora secundiflora* or near it, which was not far from the *Lophophora williamsii* area, might have played in preparing the way for or supporting Chivato and his fellow Lipan has not been reconstructed.

However, the Caddo John Wilson, at the age of about forty, became one of the most active Ghost Dance leaders in Oklahoma, 1890 to 1893, and also a noted Peyote prophet and proselytizer. His sect of Peyotism is the most popular and active modification and has continued at least ninety years. Presently, it is strong among Osage, Sioux and Winnebago, and is the dominant sect on the Goshute Reservation in western Utah.

Merrill (1977:Table 1, pp. 32-33) records that of his forty-four groups using mescalbeans as decoration, thirty-two strung them to be worn as necklaces or bandoleers during Peyote ceremonies. This was by far their most common use. He did not include analysis of photographs. However, I have old photographs showing mescalbeans with Peyote outfits worn by Comanche, Kiowa, Kiowa-Apache, Southern Arapaho, Southern Cheyenne, Deleware, Iowa, Kickapoo and Osage, as well as the Lipan mentioned above. At present, 1979, mescalbeans are sold by the hundreds by the Western Trading Post, Denver, Colorado.

Merrill (1977:60) concluded:

> The evidence presented . . . has failed to provide support either for the proposition that 1(the ceremonialism associated with the pre-reservation mescalbean medicine societies had a direct and substantial impact on the ceremonialism of the reservation Peyote Religion or for the proposition that 2) a familiarity with mescalbeans . . . enhanced the diffusion of peyotism. . . .

I concur.

Merrill's findings cast doubt upon the value of some of the theorizing about the relationship between mescalbeans and Peyote. The absence of references to mescalbeans in either Spanish or Mexican literature also makes me wonder if there really was any important relationship between mescalbeans and Peyote except to use mescalbeans to decorate clothing or wear as jewelry. The fact that the use of the term mescalbean to designate the red seed of *Sophora secundiflora* began only in 1914 further casts doubt on the importance of the relationship between mescalbeans and Peyote.

NOTES

1. The first draft of this paper was prepared at the request of Steven H. Pollock, M.D., of the Herbal Medicine Research Foundation and the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio and was presented to serve as a basis for discussion at a workshop of The 1st International Conference on Herbal Psychotropogens, San Antonio, February 24, 1979.
2. I capitalize Peyote at all times, except in quotations where it has appeared otherwise, because of its being an essential part of the designation Peyote religion and because the American Indians revere it as a sacred plant.

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CALL FOR PAPERS

PEYOTISM AND MESCALISM [1]

by

Omer C. Stewart

ABSTRACT

The identity, origin, use and relationship of Peyote or Peyote buttons and mescal, mescal buttons, mescalbeans or mescaline continue to be confused. This paper examines the history of the confusion and uses ethnohistorical data to clarify the situation. Although Peyote, *Lophophora williamsii* and mescalbean, *Sophora secundiflora*, share the same general growth area, mostly in Mexico, the Spanish and Mexican reports on Peyote use are ancient and numerous, while nothing has been written about the use of mescalbeans south of the border. The use of the term mescalbean to refer to the red seed of *Sophora secundiflora* did not appear in print until 1914. A recent study shows that the greatest use of mescalbeans has been as beads. The paper concludes that theorists have inflated the importance of the relationship between mescalbeans and Peyote.

The identity, origin, use, and relationship of Peyote(2) or Peyote buttons, on the one hand, and mescal, mescal buttons, mescalbeans, or mescaline on the other continue to be confused and to cause problems. For example, in the State of Oregon on December 12, 1973, Reginald Roland Soto was arrested for possession of mescaline when Peyote was found in his automobile during a routine search following the discovery that his driver's license had been suspended. Soto was convicted in circuit court for unlawfully possessing mescaline, a dangerous drug, according to ORS 167.207 and the conviction was affirmed by the Court of Appeals of Oregon on June 23, 1975 (Or. App. 537 P2d 142).

Another example of confusion is the 419 articles listed under mescaline, but including Peyote in the *Cumulated Index Medicus* 1960-1978.

Furthermore, in 1976, Peter T. Furst wrote (p. 108):

> What we do know is that when the hunters of bison and mammoth in the Late Pleistocene reached and settled the country of the Rio Grande they also discovered a new ritual inebriant, the highly toxic, red beanlike seed of *Sophora secundiflora*, which their descendants were to employ for the next 10,000 years in ecstatic-shamanistic medicine cults, until autonomous Indian culture succumbed to Anglo-American expansionism and the more benign peyote was adopted as the sacrament of a new syncretistic pan-Indian religion.

One can question whether it happened that way.

Probably the greatest international confusion between mescal and Peyote results from the great popularity of the allegory fabricated by Carlos Castaneda and published under the title *The Teachings of Don Juan* (1969). In chapters one and two (pp. 17-36) Castaneda combined mescal and Peyote and placed them under his own invented supernatural "Mescalito."

With four such examples of the continuing concern with Peyote and mescal it appears that another evaluation of that relationship is warranted. This study was also suggested by an article by Edward F. Anderson, "The biogeography, ecology, and taxonomy of *Lophophora* (*Cactaceae*)" (1969) and by a monograph by William L. Merrill, "An investigation of ethnographic and archaeolog-

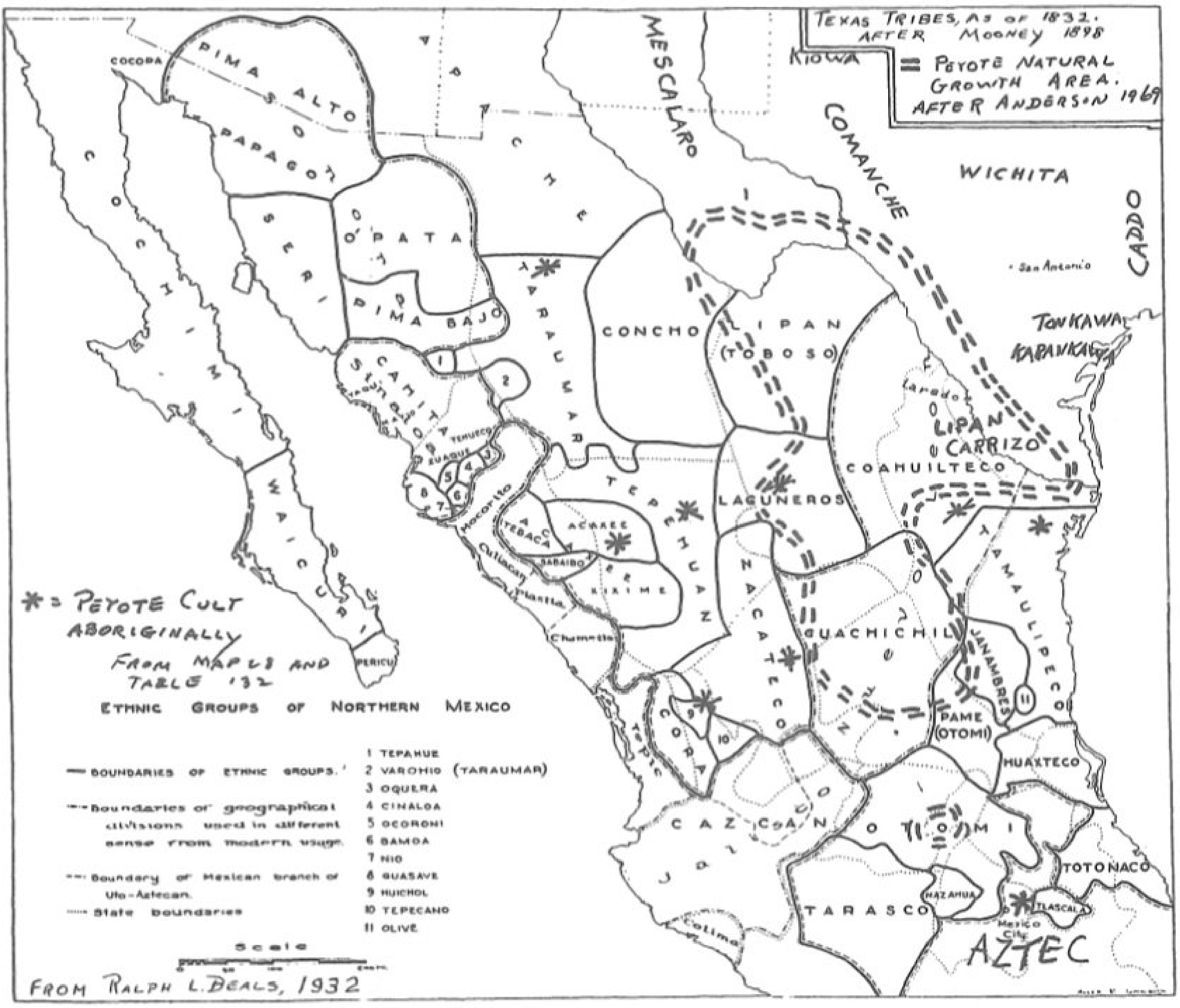

Fig. 1. Map showing Texas tribes, Peyote natural growth area and aboriginal distribution of Peyote Cult. Compiled by O. Stewart, 1979.

ical specimens of mescalbeans (*Sophora secundiflora*) in American museums" (1977). Along with the maps showing the natural growth areas of Peyote and mescalbeans, Anderson and Merrill cite the essential literature concerned with the botanical identification of the two species, *Lophophora* and *Sophora*. In addition to maps based on the above, this paper presents a copy of a map published by Ralph L. Beals (1932), showing the Ethnic Groups of Northern Mexico, to which has been added the Peyote natural growth area from Anderson (1969) and tribal locations in Texas as of 1830 from Mooney (1898). According to Slotkin (1955) and Aguirre Beltran (1963) the earliest suppliers of Peyote known to the Spanish were the tribes of the Peyote growing area of Mexico, and the tribes near it, who were combined under the name Chichimec. In Fig. 1 asterisks (*) show the locations of the earliest aboriginal practitioners of the Peyote Cult as determined by Beals (1932). Fig. 2 presents the natural range of mescalbean *Sophora secundiflora* (after Merrill 1977) and the natural range of *Lophophora* (after Anderson 1969). These distributions alone are important to consider when theorizing about the relationship between *Sophora* and *Lophophora*.

B. Sahagun (ca. 1560), F. Hernandez (ca. 1576), Urbina (1900) and Safford (1915) identified Peyote and recognized the general limits of its range. Described as a small, spineless, grayish-green cactus which barely

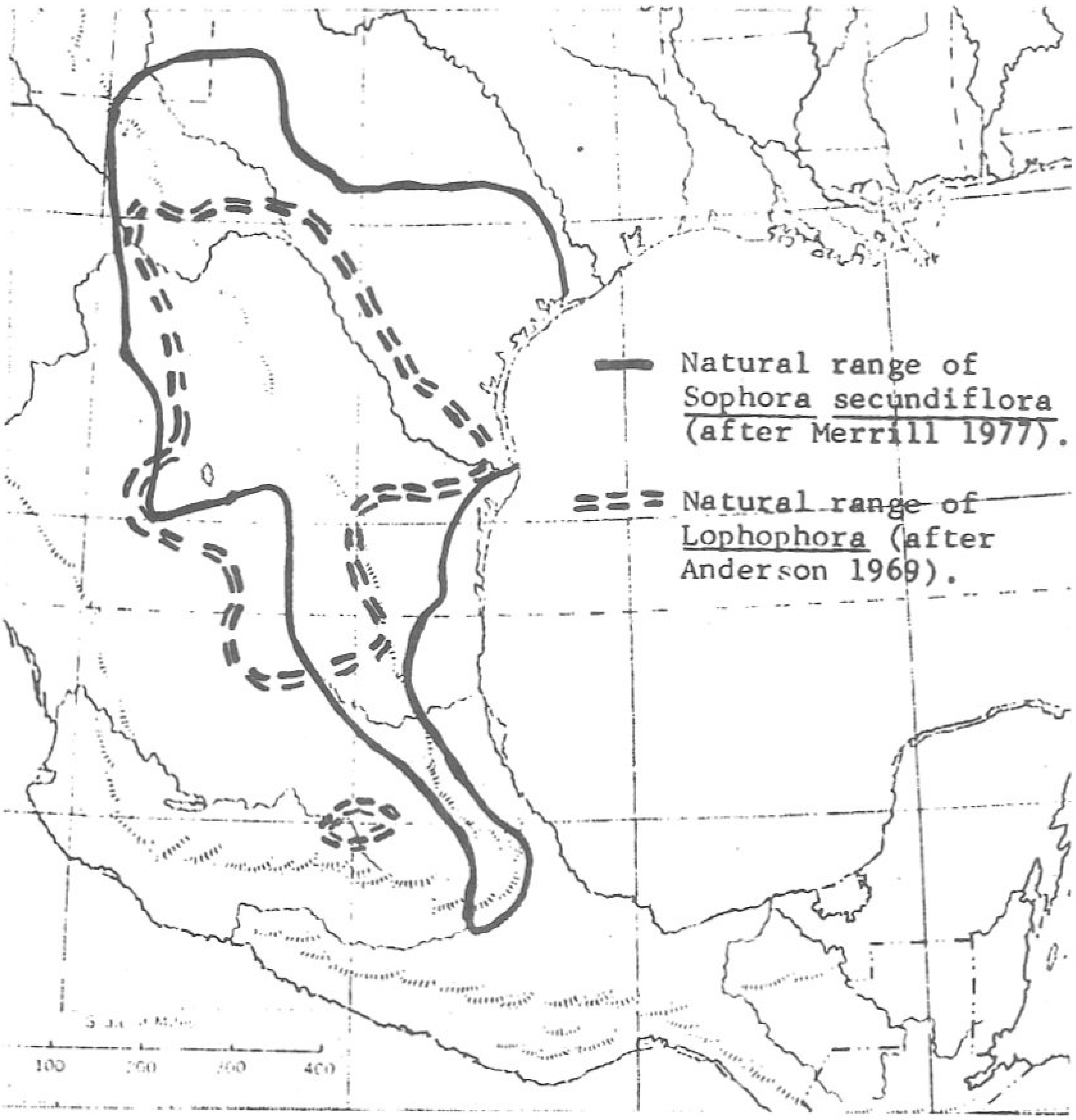
Natural range of Sophora secundiflora (after Merrill 1977).
Natural range of Lophophora (after Anderson 1969).
100
200
300
400

Fig. 2. Map showing range of *Sophora secundiflora* (after Merrill 1977) and natural range of *Lophophora* (after Anderson 1969).

projected above the ground, its use in ritual, to cure, to foretell the future and to find lost objects, and its ability to produce visions and a slight intoxication had caused it to be considered sacred by aborigines. Although recognized for what it was, *Peyotl*, as named by the Aztec, was confused, most spectacularly by Safford (1915), with other psychedelic plants used by the aborigines in Mexico, such as *Teonanacatl*, the sacred mushroom, and *Ololiuqui*, the morning glory. The mistakes of Safford (1915), many times quoted by others, were finally corrected by Schultes (1937a).

In view of the fact that nearly all of the growth area of Peyote in Mexico was within the natural area of the mescalbean (*Sophora secundiflora*) as shown in Fig. 2 it is surprising that early Spanish reports of use of Peyote in Mexico carry no word of the use of mescalbeans for purposes similar to Peyote. For example, Slotkin (1955) listed over 30 Spanish publications relating to Peyote from 1577 to 1800. Aguirre Beltran (1963) enumerated 74 Inquisition court cases dealing with

Peyote 1614 to 1779. Although the growth area of *Sophora* in Mexico exceeds the area of *Lophophora* growth no reference was made to the mystical use of the red bean of *Sophora* during the time that over a hundred references were made to the use of Peyote for mystical purposes.

According to Safford (1916:397), Ortega "described and figured" in 1798 a *Sophora secundiflora* "growing in the Royal Garden at Madrid." In 1963 Schultes reported that references to the mescalbeans "go back to 1539, when Cabeza de Vaca spoke of them as objects of trade amongst the Texas indians." Two other Spanish references to *Sophora* in Texas cited by Troike (1962) suggest that Texas Indians used *Sophora* seed in ritual. He wrote (p. 949): "According to the missionary Francisco Hidalgo, the Caddo of East Texas used the mescal beans (called *frixolillo* or *frijolillo* in Spanish) as early as 1716: . . . 'in the dances which they have, the Indian man or woman who is intoxicated with the peyote or *frixolillo*, . . . tells what he [or she] has seen . . .' " The second citation is from Father Bartholome Garcia (1760) of the San Antonio mission and was part of a confessional in the Coahuiltecan language, rendered in English as follows (Troike 1962:954): "Have you eaten Peyote? Did it intoxicate you? Have you eaten *frixolillo*? Did it intoxicate you?" Taylor (1966:129-130) comments on Garcia's catechism and compares it to an earlier form prepared in Mexico by Father B. Alva in 1635. The Mexico City confessional and that of San Antonio asked if the confessor had eaten human flesh or Peyote, but the question regarding the coral bean or *frixolillo*, was absent from the Mexican edition. Thus notwithstanding early Spanish knowledge of the shrub *Sophora secundiflora* the use of its bright red bean in magic or religion escaped the early Catholics in Mexico.

Having sketched the early history of Peyote and found it associated with the mescalbean only in Texas, a few more words of definition of mescal is called for. There are few words which have taken on so many diverse meanings. It seems appropriate to start with the entry in the Handbook of American Indians.

> MESCAL (Aztec: *mexcalli, 'metl* [maguey) liquor'). The fleshy leaf bases and trunk of various species of agave. It was roasted in pit ovens and became a sweet and nutritious food among the Indians of the states on both sides of the Mexican Boundry. . . .
>
> The product must not be confounded with the distilled spirit known in Mexico under the same name, nor with *peyote* (Hodge, ed. 1907,I:845).

To the above LaBarre (1938:15) added. "By extension the term is applied to the intoxicant distilled from the native beer, pulque, also made from *Agave* spp. A more precise designation of this native brandy (as opposed to the native beer) is tesvino and its variants, from the Nahuatl tehuinti or teyuinti, 'intoxicating.' " In Mexico neither Indians nor other citizens have applied the word mescal to Peyote or to the red beans of the *Sophora*. Unfortunately, in the United States mescal came to designate three different plants, *Agave*, spp, *Lophophora williamsii*, and *Sophora secundiflora*. The earliest American reference to Peyote is in Havard (1885:470), in which he identified it as *Anhelonia fissurata*, and *A. williamsii* with the Spanish name *Pallote* and English Peyote. In the same study he described

> *Sophora secundiflora* (Frijolilo; Coral Bean) Stout ornamental shrub. . . . The pod holds 3 or 4 round, red beans, the size of small marbles, and very poisonous. . . . According to Dr. Rothrock (who quotes Mr. Bellanger, of Texas, as his informant) The Indians near San Antonio used this bean as an intoxicant, half a bean producing delirious exhilaration followed by a sleep which lasts 2 or 3 days, and it is asserted that a whole bean would kill a man (Havard 1885:500).

In 1888 the annual report of Indian Agent E. E. White wrote of *Woqui* of the Comanche and added: "Its common name here among the whites is mescal bean." At about the same time J.R. Briggs, M.D., of Dallas ate some Peyote, and reported his experience to the *Medical Register* which published it April 7, 1887, and it was soon reprinted in the *Druggists' Bulletin* (1887:87), under the title "Muscale Buttons — Physiological Action — a Mexican Fruit with Possible Medicinal Virtues." In 1887 Briggs sent five bushels of Muscale buttons to Parke-Davis in Detroit. In 1888, Park-Davis sent buttons to Louis Lewin in Germany who shared them with D. Henning. According to Bender (1968:163): "Muscale buttons entered into the literature of medicine as *Anhalonium Lewinii', Henning*" by means of an article in the *Therapeutic Gazette* (Lewis 1888:231-37).

The misnomer continued and enlarged in

reports of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs until the error was identified in an Oklahoma court in 1907. It expanded to the scholarly and popular literature through the mistakes of Smithsonian Ethnologist James Mooney who was a participant observer in a Kiowa Peyote meeting in early 1891. When writing of it in a letter in April 1891, he called it the "mescal ceremony." In a speech before the Anthropological Society of Washington, as reported November 4, 1891, in the Washington D.C. *Evening Star*, Mooney talked on "The Kiowa Mescal Rite." A copyrighted story by Mooney in the January 24, 1892 issue of *The Augusta Chronicle* had the headline EATING THE MESCAL. *The American Anthropologist* (1892:64-65) published a short article and a photograph of a Peyote rattle with the title "A Kiowa Mescal Rattle." Under the title "The Mescal Plant and Ceremony," Mooney published a paper in *The Therapeutic Gazette* in which the names for *Anhalonium williamsii* were explained as follows:

> Among the Kiowa it was *seni*; among the Comanche *wokowi*; with the Mescaleros, *ho*; and with the Tarahumaris, *hikori*. The traders of the Indian Territory commonly call it mescal, although it must not be confounded with another mescal in Arizona, the *Agave* . . . The local Mexican name upon the Rio Grande is *peyote* or *pellote*, from the old Aztec name *peyotl*. . . . The Mescalero Apache take their name from it. (Mooney 1896:7-11)

In a footnote Mooney reports "Mr. Colville, botanist of the Agricultural Department, has made a distinct genus of the mescal plant, calling it *Lophophora williamsii* Lewinii." In 1897, Mooney wrote of "The Kiowa Peyote Rite," in *Der Urquell*.

The drug company of Parke-Davis supplied some European scholars with large samples of Peyote, which soon became known and shared. A few years later James Mooney of Smithsonian Institution furnished Peyote in sufficient quantity to several American doctors for objective tests of the properties and effects of the cactus. Havelock Ellis, an early English psychologist, in June 1897 published one of the first such studies in a medical journal entitled "A Note on the Phenomena of Mescal Intoxication." Slightly enlarged and rewritten it reappeared in a literary journal, *The Contemporary Review', as "Mescal: A* New Artificial Paradise" in January 1898. Within months it was reprinted without change in the Annual Report of Smithsonian Insitution for 1897, pp. 537-548 (published April 1898). It entered public knowledge by being reprinted in *Popular Science Monthly* in 1902. It may have been reprinted many times, but I have in hand one by Ebin (1961). In 1898 Ellis gave the background for his experiment as follows:

> In 1891 Mr. James Mooney, of the United States Bureau of Ethnology, having frequently observed the mescal rites of the Kiowa Indians and assisted at them called the attention of the Anthropological Society at Washington to the subject, and three years later he brought to Washington a supply of mescal, which was handed over for examination to Drs. Prentiss and Morgan. These investigators experimented on several young men, and demonstrated, for the first time, the precise character of mescal intoxication and the remarkable visions to which it gives rise. A little later Dr. Weir Mitchell, who in addition to his eminence as a physician, is a man of marked aesthetic temperament, experimented on himself, and published a very interesting record of the brilliant visions by which he was visited under the influence of the plant. In the spring of the past year I was able to obtain a small sample of mescal in London, and as my first experiment with mescal was also, apparently, the first attempt to investigate its vision-producing properties outside America, I will describe it in some detail, in preference to drawing on the previously published descriptions of American observers. (Ellis 1898:)

At this point in his article he drew attention to this footnote: "Lewin, of Berlin, indeed experimented with *Anhalonium Lewinii*, to which he gave its name, as early as 1888, and as he found that even a small portion produced dangerous symptoms, he classed it amongst the extremely poisonous drugs, like strychnia." The importance of the early experiments is evidenced from their being cited by ethnologist Edward H. Spicer (1969:320-322) in his review of the first volume by Carlos Castaneda.

The experimenting has continued, and in recent years, almost entirely with the synthetic alkaloid Mescaline, rather than by eating an unmodified part of the cactus. Reports of such experiments form the massive medical literature, 419 articles in 20 years, easily found from titles listed in the *Cumulated Index Medicus*. No more than a dozen of the titles suggested articles of ethnohistorical content. Being based on the synthetic aklaloid the medical experimenters seem unconcerned and untroubled with the fact that the alkaloid's name suggests a relationship to a liquor made from *Agave* rather than being the most active of several alkaloids in *Lophora williamsii* or Peyote.

The error of using mescal, mescal button and mescalbean to designate Peyote has had most troublesome consequences in legal matters. The first law to prohibit Peyote in the United States was enacted by the Oklahoma Territorial legislature in 1899 upon the recommendation of U.S. Indian Agents (Woodson, 1899), but the law was ineffectual when tested in court in 1907, because the law declared the use of "mescal beans" was unlawful. The 1907 cases were dismissed because the Indians convinced the judge they used Peyote in their rituals and not mescalbeans. Further clarification came in January 1908 when Indian Agents attempted to amend the anti-mescalbean law by adding "Peyote." The Peyotists blocked the attempt to outlaw Peyote by having a large delegation of Peyotist Indian Chiefs including Quanah Parker (Comanche), Joe Springer (Iowa), Black Dog (Osage) and others testify that red beans were not eaten in Peyote meetings and that only Peyote was consumed in such rituals. The newly-created Oklahoma State legislature then repealed the anti-mescalbean law and refused to pass the anti-Peyote law (Documents in Oklahoma Historical Society).

Since the U.S. Government officials from 1888 until 1908 used the name "mescal button" or "mescalbean" to designate Peyote in hundreds of letters, reports, publications, etc. it was difficult to change. Following the court rulings in Oklahoma and the action of the Oklahoma legislature specifying that mescalbean did not signify Peyote for legal purposes the Bureau of Indian Affairs nearly always wrote "peyote or mescal," and tried to popularize Peyote as the name for the cactus *Lophophora williamsii*. Until 1907 mescalbean was used *only* to mean the dried product of the *Lophophora williamsii*, since then called the Peyote button.

By some mysterious process when the misnomer for Peyote, mescalbean, was forcibly stopped from signifying Peyote it reappeared as the misnomer for the coral bean or *frixolillo*, that is, for the red seed of *Sophora secundiflora*. The shift appears to have started in February 1907 when a large delegation of Peyotists met with the Medical Committee of the Oklahoma Consitutional Convention. On the catalog card for a group photograph of the committee and delegation appears the following: "At this meeting, Chief Quannah explained that mescalbeans were poison and peyote is herb learned from the Mexican Indians to the Lipan Apache, then Comanche, Kiowa, etc." Kiowa-Apache Tennyson Berry, identified himself and others on the photograph when he presented it to the Fort Still Museum and told what took place.

Also in February 1907 was the trial of Peyotists in Kingfisher, Oklahoma, three were convicted, but later freed on appeal. After the legal difficulties officials of the BIA exchanged dozens of letters seeking to firmly identify mescalbeans. On August 21, 1907, Special Indian Agent R. S. Connell wrote to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in Washington D.C. as follows: "The bean which he expects the Mexican Indians to swear to as a mescalbean . . . is called Frijolillo or Coral bean. . . . Mescal is a term used for poison." Connell cited a U.S. National Herbarium publication giving "an accurate description" of Frijolillo or Coral bean, but the reference to *Sophora secundiflora* does *not* apply the name mescalbeans to the red seeds.

In 1908, at the hearings before the Oklahoma legislature, Quannah said: "The mescalbean cannot be eaten . . . it is peyote that is used as medicine." He also said he had seen in Mexico three plants used by Indians: "One is a bean, like a peanut; mescal grows that high (indicating top of desk) and the whiskey is made of that; and there is the Peyote we use." An Iowa chief, Joe Springer, testified: "I told my agent that there is no such thing as mescalbean in American . . . . they make mescal whiskey in Old Mexico . . . the little red bean—we call it red medicine." Attorney for the Indians, D. K. Cunningham, also made remarks before the legislators, as follows: "As a matter of fact, there is no such thing as the mescalbean, but because these words were in quotation marks [as the law was printed] it was said that they were intended to mean Peyote . . . . Indians do not want to use mescal. They do not want to use that bean. That bean is poisonous and dangerous . . . you cannot take more than two or three without it being likely to kill you."

From my search of botanical and ethnographic literature the earliest published example of use of mescalbean in ritual is in the monograph by Murie, "Pawnee Indian Societies" (1914:605) as follows: "The *raris ta*, or deer society, is found among all divisions, but its ritual seems to be in keeping of the Skidi organization. The fundamental elements of the ritual seem to be based upon the mescal bean, for this society teaches that all animal powers were learned through the power of the mescal bean." Mescalbeans were used during initiation and the candidate was made unconscious. Murie and his editors at the American Museum of Natural History, did not otherwise identify mescalbean, except to *not* connect it with Peyote, which was also discussed in the monograph.

In 1915, the American Museum of Natural History also published a monograph, "Iowa Societies," by Alanson Skinner, which may have been the most important of all papers to establish mescalbean as the proper name to designate the red seed of *Sophora secundiflora*. It is ironic that Iowa Chief Joe Springer, who testified in Oklahoma in 1908 that "there is no such thing as mescal bean," was quoted by Skinner (1915:724) as saying: "The name peyote is Mexican and it is not to be confounded with 'mescal' which is a different plant, bearing red beans which come two or three in a pod." Skinner (1915:718-719) did not quote an informant for his account of the Red Bean Dance but wrote as follows: "This is an ancient rite (*mankacutzi waci*) far antedating the modern peyote eating practice but on the same principle. The society was founded by a faster who dreamed that he received it from the deer, for red beans (mescal) are sometimes found in a deers stomach." Elsewhere in the report on the Red Bean Dance, mescal is not repeated but red bean is used several times. The importance of Skinner's monograh is manifest in its being quoted by Safford (1916:397-398) to support his own view that mescalbean is a proper name for the seeds of *Sophora secundiflora*. After reporting that the shrub had been early planted in the Royal Garden in Madrid, Safford wrote:

> From Texas, reports have been received that the seeds have poisoned children. The plant, though usually avoided by animals, is eaten by deer and goats, and the herd, glossy beans when swallowed whole are apparently harmless. In early days they were much used by certain tribes of Indians for making a narcotic decoction, and when ground to a powder were put in mescal, or Agave brandy, to make it more intoxicating; hence the name 'mescal bean,' which was formerly applied to them. (Safford 1916:397-398)

After quoting Havard (1885:500) regarding *Sophora secundiflora*, as I have above, which does not use mescal bean, Safford quotes from Skinner the phrase "red bean (mescal)." In another monograph on the Iowa, Skinner (1926:245-247) quotes ethnographic notes recorded by M. R. Harrington from conversations with Iowa Chief David Tohee as follows: "Now, the 'Red Medicine' which forms the basis of the bundle, is the sacred red Mescal bean (*erythrina flabelliformis*) which seems to have narcotic or perhaps intoxicating properties." *Erythrina* and *Sophora* both have bright red seeds which may be mistakenly interchanged. Finally, Boughton and Hardy (1935) made it explicit with a pamphlet "Mescalbean (*Sophora secundiflora*) poisonous for cattle."

In 1936 Weston LaBarre and Richard Schultes were together in Oklahoma studying the Peyote religion. Based in part on that fieldwork, especially among the Kiowa, in 1937 Schultes published two numbers of the Botanical Museum Leaflets, Harvard University, on Peyote and plants confused with it and plants used in its ceremony. At the same time LaBarre at Yale was writing his Ph.D. dissertation which was published in 1938 as The Peyote Cult. With both Schultes and LaBarre accepting mescalbean as equivalent to the *Sophora secundiflora* (Frijolillo; Coral bean) of Havard (1885:500) a pattern was firmly set to be used thereafter for considerable theorizing.

It seems appropriate to start with a quotation from LaBarre (1938:15):

> 'Mescal bean' as used to designate *Lophophora williamsii* is quite indefensible, being wrong on two accounts: the 'mescal' bean proper is *Sophora secundiflora* (= *Broussonetia secundiflora*) or incorrectly, *Erythrina flabelliformis*. The former is a red bean which was used in a pre-peyote narcotic cult of the southern Plains. . . . The adjectival use 'mescal' in the designation 'mescal beans' or 'mescal buttons' no doubt comes from the known intoxicating properties of the distilled liquor mescal, as extended in meaning to other unfamiliar new intoxicants. *Sophora secundiflora* (bean) and *Lophophora williamsii* (cactus); . . . Further confusion of peyote with mescal has arisen from the north Mexican habit of mixing the two in a drink.

If the red seed of the *Sophora secundiflora*, named *frijolillo* and/or coral bean for a couple of centuries, should be properly designated "mescal" bean, LaBarre might well have explained why such a designation was not made in print until it was put down by Murie (1914:605) and Skinner (1915:718), for the Iowa and Pawnee, both tribes being relatively recent migrants into Oklahoma from the north.

It is interesting that LaBarre should report that Peyote was called mescalbean or button because Peyote was at times added to mescal brandy, to increase its ability to intoxicate. Safford (1916:397) said the red seeds of *Sophora* acquired the name mescalbeans because they were added to mescal or Agave brandy. The surprising fact is that neither Peyote nor *frijolillo* were designated mescalbeans in Mexico.

When it is known that the natural growth area of mescalbean (*Sophora secundiflora*) extends beyond that of Peyote in east Texas (see Fig. 2), one would be warranted in assuming that the ritual use of mescalbeans in that area was older than Peyotism. In the region where Peyote and mescalbean both grow, which is nearly all of the Peyote natural area, there appears to be no reason to assume the use of one began before the use of the other. It is my opinion that hunting and gathering peoples learned the properties of all plants, animals, and insects which occurred in their home territory shortly after arriving in the area. Indians would have discovered and eaten both Peyote and mescalbeans in south Texas and northern Mexico as soon as they arrived and would have declared both possessed of supernatural powers because both produced very marked physical and psychic reactions. In the area where both grow, as in Mexico one might expect that the milder, safer plant would have greater use and develop into a cult. The poisonous red bean of *Sophora* might be expected to be treated like another poisonous narcotic of the area, *Datura*.

It is not surprising that the tough red bean was traded more widely, earlier then Peyote simply because of its attractive appearance, and its greater durability, which might also explain the red bean in possession of an Arapaho on the western plains as reported by the Stephen Long Expedition in 1820 (James 1905:217). Also the toughness of the mescalbean could account for its being found in great quantities and at deeper levels in archaeological sites in the Peyote-mescalbean growth area.

Howard (1957) proposed that the mescalbean cult preceded and probably provided the basic cultural elements to the milder Peyote cult in their place of origin. Although LaBarre (1957) was quick to find fault with much of Howard's article he did say (p. 710): "Howard's basic thesis that the ritual form of peyotism is derived from an earlier mescal bean ceremony is a good one." He reported some archaeological evidence for the antiquity of mescalbeans in south Texas and modern Mexico. Campbell (1958) reported many archaeological finds of mescalbeans and two finds of Peyote in Texas caves, but it remained for Adovasio and Fry (1976) to report that hundreds of mescalbeans had been found in many deposits dated back to 7500 B.C. while Peyote had been in only a few sites in levels 810 to 1070 A.D.

In 1962, Troike reviewed the evidence for the relationship between mescalism and Peyotism and expressed doubt that mescalism preceded Peyotism. Troike wrote (p. 961): "Thus the mescal bean, along with peyote and datura, seems to have been part of a widespread and very ancient narcotic complex in northern Mexico."

The opinion that the potentially lethal red bean cult preceded the Peyote religion continues to be expressed (Schultes 1972, 1973; LaBarre 1972, 1975; Furst 1972, 1976). LaBarre, according to Furst (1972:VIII) attributes use of psychotropogens "to a kind of cultural programming for personal ecstatic experience reaching back to the American Indians' ideological roots in the shamanistic religion of the Upper Paleolithic and Mesolithic hunting and gathering cultures of northeastern Asia." In 1976, Furst was able to cite *The Natural Mind* of Dr. Andrew T. Weil (1972:17) as follows: "The desire to alter consciousness periodically is an innate, normal drive analogous to hunger or the sexual drive." Furst continues with an unqualified assertion that evidence for a red bean (*Sophora*) cult goes back to 7265 B.C. and that use of *Sophora* was replaced by the "benign peyote cactus."

Most scholars recognize that assertions that a red bean cult was present about 7000 B.C. are not warranted. No undisputed evidence from archaeology justifies more than a cautious opinion that the finds of *Sophora* beans suggest the possibility of a cult. No

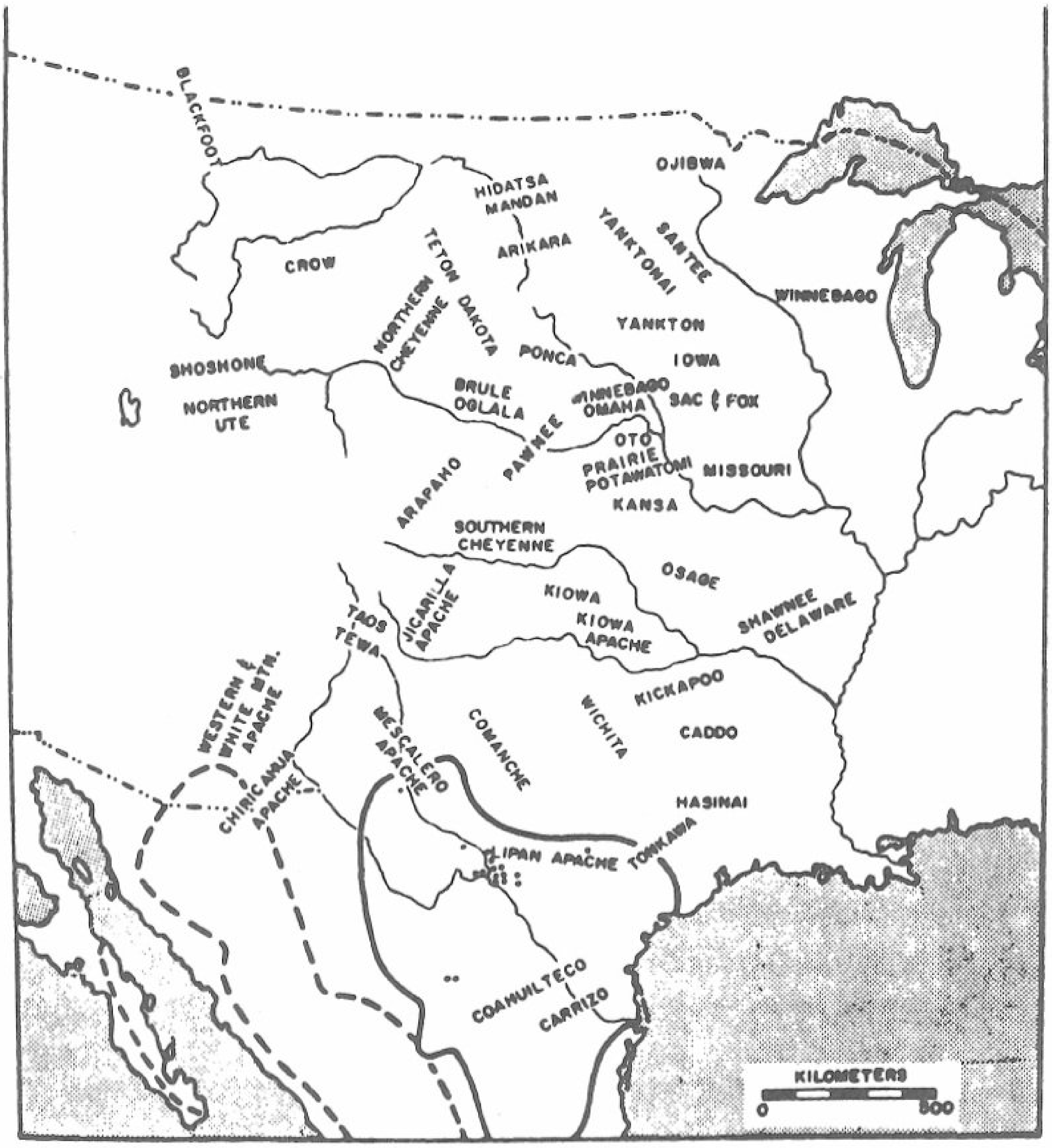

Fig. 3. Approximate locations of Indian groups discussed in text. The solid heavy line indicates the limits of the distribution of *Sophora secundiflora*, the broken heavy line, that of *Erythrina flabelliformis*. The dots that appear within the solid heavy line mark the location of archaeological sites from which mescalbeans have been recovered. From: *An Investigation of Ethnographic and Archaeological Specimens of Mescalbeans [Sophora Secundiflora] in American Museums*. (Merrill 1977:6).

Spanish historic reports I could find state that *Sophora secundiflora* beans were used in rituals in Mexico.

A new study of mescalism has recently appeared, from which Fig. 3 I was taken, showing the *Sophora secundiflora* growth area and giving locations of the tribes discussed. In 1977, William L. Merrill of the University of Michigan Museum published an exhaustive review of published references to mescalbeans (*Sophora secundiflora*) and examined museum collections of mescalbeans and items decorated with them from the seven largest ethnographic museums in eastern United States and received photographs and descriptions of such items from eight other museums coast to coast. Merrill (1977:1x) wrote:

> The exploitation of the psychotropic properties of mescalbeans was the most dramatic use of mescalbeans by North American Indian groups, and the most elaborate symbolism and ceremonialism associated with the use of mescalbeans was developed by those American Indian groups who employed them in this fashion. Yet, of the more than thirty North American Indian groups who were familiar with mescalbeans, less than half are known ever to have consumed them. Without question, the most widespread and continuous purpose for which North American Indian groups have employed mescalbeans is as seed beads attached to a wide variety of articles. . .

An archaeological specimen from Val Verde County, Texas, a buckskin loin cloth decorated with *Sophora secundiflora* seeds, illustrates the ancient use of the beans as decoration (Merrill 1977:7).

Merrill identifies forty-four tribal groups which, use mescalbeans as material culture. Five of these lived or traveled in the natural growth areas of *Sophora secundiflora* and *Lophophora williamsii* in pre-Spanish times. These were Coahuilteco, Tonkawa, Caddo, Wichita, and Mescalero Apache. The tribes which moved into the natural range of *Sophora* followed Spanish occupation of the American Southwest and Texas, but before 1850 were the Kiowa, Kiowa-Apache, Comanche and Lipan Apache. Of the eighteen tribes Merrill names as consuming mescalbeans individually or ceremonially, eight are named above; i.e., all except the Kiowa-Apache. The other ten red-bean-eaters never occupied the natural range of *Sophora*. Four of the groups who lived for long periods during the last two centuries in the natural range of *Sophora* left no record of ceremonial use of the mescalbean. These are Lipan Apache, Mescalero Apache, Kiowa-Apache and Kiowa, and there is some question about Comanche. Nine prairie tribes with mescalbean ceremonial use never occupied the *Sophora* natural area, although seven of the nine moved into Oklahoma from farther north during the last third of the nineteenth century. These seven were Pawnee, Iowa, Oto, Missouri, Kansas, Osage and Ponca. Only the Prairie Potawatomi and Omaha developed mescalbean rites without staying in Oklahoma or living for long periods in the *Sophora* natural growth area.

Twenty-five other tribal groups have used mescalbeans as seed bead decoration, but have no record of using them in special red bean ceremonies. These include Blackfoot, Crow and Cheyenne of Montana; Arikara, Mandan, Hidatsa and Sioux of North Dakota; Ojibwa of Minnesota; Omaha and Winnebago of Nebraska; Sioux of South Dakota; Sac and Fox, Shawnee, Delaware, Kickapoo, Arapaho and Cheyenne of Oklahoma; Taos, Santa Clara and Apache of Arizona, and Shoshone and Arapaho of Wyoming.

When considering presence or absence of Peyotism among the forty-four groups who used mescalbeans to decorate materials, it is obvious there is a high correlation between the two. That eight groups of mescalbean users should not also have Peyote might come as a surprise, especially when it is learned the eight are made up of three groups of Sioux in South Dakota; three groups of Apache in southern Arizona; the Blackfoot of Montana and the Santa Clara Pueblo of New Mexico. Of more interest may be the reports of Peyotism among the eighteen Indian groups where mescal was ingested in a ritual or as a medicine.

Except for one, the nine groups occupying the area of natural growth consumed *Sophora secundiflora* and *Lophophora williamsii*. Only Kiowa-Apache among the early Peyotists are not known to ingest mescalbeans. The groups longest in the Peyote and mescalbean area, the Coahuilteco, Tonkawa, Caddo, and Lipan Apache would seem to be the organizers of the Peyote religion which was taught directly to the other five groups which had traveled most in the *Sophora* and *Lophophora* areas—the Wichita, Comanche, Kiowa, Kiowa-Apache and the Mescalero Apache.

I have now well documented and named the four Lipan Apache Indians who were born near Laredo, Texas, and who settled with the Kiowa, Kiowa-Apache and Comanche and who were named as teachers of the Peyote ritual around Fort Sill in Indian Territory, now western Oklahoma. The best known is Chivato, who was photographed in a Peyote meeting wearing a mescalbean bandoleer.

In 1859, the only U.S. Indian reservation in Texas was raided and the Indians were forced to flee to Indian Territory. The role of the Caddo, Tonkawa and Wichita, removed from the growth area of *Sophora secundiflora* or near it, which was not far from the *Lophophora williamsii* area, might have played in preparing the way for or supporting Chivato and his fellow Lipan has not been reconstructed.

However, the Caddo John Wilson, at the age of about forty, became one of the most active Ghost Dance leaders in Oklahoma, 1890 to 1893, and also a noted Peyote prophet and proselytizer. His sect of Peyotism is the most popular and active modification and has continued at least ninety years. Presently, it is strong among Osage, Sioux and Winnebago, and is the dominant sect on the Goshute Reservation in western Utah.

Merrill (1977:Table 1, pp. 32-33) records that of his forty-four groups using mescalbeans as decoration, thirty-two strung them to be worn as necklaces or bandoleers during Peyote ceremonies. This was by far their most common use. He did not include analysis of photographs. However, I have old photographs showing mescalbeans with Peyote outfits worn by Comanche, Kiowa, Kiowa-Apache, Southern Arapaho, Southern Cheyenne, Deleware, Iowa, Kickapoo and Osage, as well as the Lipan mentioned above. At present, 1979, mescalbeans are sold by the hundreds by the Western Trading Post, Denver, Colorado.

Merrill(1977:60) concluded:

> The evidence presented . . . has failed to provide support either for the proposition that 1(the ceremonialism associated with the pre-reservation mescalbean medicine societies had a direct and substantial impact on the ceremonialism of the reservation Peyote Religion or for the proposition that 2) a familiarity with mescalbeans . . . enhanced the diffusion of peyotism. . . .

I concur.

Merrill's findings cast doubt upon the value of some of the theorizing about the relationship between mescalbeans and Peyote. The absence of references to mescalbeans in either Spanish or Mexican literature also makes me wonder if there really was any important relationship between mescalbeans and Peyote except to use mescalbeans to decorate clothing or wear as jewelry. The fact that the use of the term mescalbean to designate the red seed of *Sophora secundiflora* began only in 1914 further casts doubt on the importance of the relationship between mescalbeans and Peyote.

NOTES

1. The first draft of this paper was prepared at the request of Steven H. Pollock, M.D., of the Herbal Medicine Research Foundation and the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio and was presented to serve as a basis for discussion at a workshop of The 1st International Conference on Herbal Psychotropogens, San Antonio, February 24, 1979.
2. I capitalize Peyote at all times, except in quotations where it has appeared otherwise, because of its being an essential part of the designation Peyote religion and because the American Indians revere it as a sacred plant.

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